

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-08 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 SSM-05 CIAE-00
DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-02
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 MC-02 ACDA-10 /117 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/P:EOJONES:RGH
APPROVED BY NEA/P:GFSHERMAN
S/PRS - MR. BROWN (INFO)
H - MR. FLATEN (INFO)
SSM - MR. MC ANDREW
NEA - MS. GRIFFIN
NEA/ARN - MR. REUTHER
NEA/PAB - MR. LANDE

-----312153Z 127926 /67

R 311928Z JAN 77
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN
USINT BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
AMEMBASSY TUNIS
USMISSION SINAI
AMCONSUL DHAHRAN
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USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
USMISSION NATO
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

USCINCEUR

UNCLAS STATE 021253

GENEVA FOR MEPC DEL, CINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJECT: DEPARTMENT PRESS BRIEFING - JANUARY 28

FOR YOUR INFORMATION AND GUIDANCE FOLLOWING ARE EXCERPTS
FROM DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN'S PRESS BRIEFING FOR
JANUARY 28, 1977:

1.

Q. YESTERDAY, WHEN YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT THE FORD
ADMINISTRATION'S PLEDGE OF ARMS TO ISRAEL AND THE CARTER
ADMINISTRATION'S POSITION, I WASN'T CLEAR WHETHER YOU WERE
TALKING ABOUT CONSULTATION WITH CONGRESS BEFORE THE
LETTERS ARE PRESENTED OF OFFER (SIC), OR AFTER THE LETTERS
OF OFFER ARE PRESENTED?

A. I DON'T THINK I SPECIFIED BEFORE OR AFTER. I SAID
THERE WOULD BE CONSULTATION.

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Q. WELL, WHEN IS IT, WHEN WILL THE CONSULTATION TAKE
PLACE?

A. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. YOU DON'T KNOW WHETHER BEFORE OR AFTER?

A. I DON'T KNOW.

Q. WHY ARE THE CONSULTATIONS NECESSARY IN ADVANCE OF
THE LETTERS OF OFFER, IF THAT IS TO BE THE CASE?

A. I DIDN'T SAY THEY WOULD BE IN ADVANCE; I SAID I DIDN'T
KNOW. BUT I DID SAY YESTERDAY THAT THE CONSULTATION WITH
CONGRESS IS BECAUSE OF INTEREST IN THE SALES AND THE
SIGNIFICANCE ATTRIBUTED TO THEM. I DON'T KNOW WHETHER IT
IS GOING TO BE BEFORE OR AFTER.

Q. LET ME PUT IT THIS WAY: WHY ISN'T THE STATE
DEPARTMENT WILLING TO GO AHEAD WITH THE PLEDGE MADE BY THE
ADMINISTRATION, THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION?

A. I SAID YESTERDAY -- I DON'T THINK YOU WERE HERE,
BUT I WENT INTO IT AT SOME LENGTH IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS

ON THE SUBJECT -- THAT THE TECHNICAL PROCESS IS GOING AHEAD IN KEEPING WITH THE COMMITMENT MADE BY THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION, AND WE HAD A BACK AND FORTH ON COMMITMENT, ETC.

Q. I THINK THE RECORD WILL SHOW THAT WHAT YOU SAID WAS THAT THERE WOULD BE CONSULTATION ON THOSE ITEMS NOT COVERED BY LETTERS OF OFFER.

A. I DON'T THINK I SAID THAT.

Q. IT IS ON THE ITEMS UNDER DOLS 7 MILLION, I BELIEVE.
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A. NO. I THINK I SAID THAT THE ADMINISTRATION WOULD ALSO WISH TO HAVE CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESS ON THE FULL EXTENT OF THE ITEMS BEING DISCUSSED.

Q. CAN YOU TELL US TODAY AS TO HOW LONG THE TECHNICAL PROCESS WILL TAKE BEFORE THE LETTERS OF OFFER ARE SUBMITTED TO CONGRESS?

A. I THINK THE LETTERS OF OFFER GO UP FROM DOD, AND I THINK THAT IS SOMETHING YOU SHOULD ASK THEM. IT REALLY IS A TECHNICAL PROCESS THAT THEY ARE PRIMARILY CONCERNED WITH.

Q. IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT LEAVING IT TO THE PENTAGON TO MAKE THE DECISION?

A. NO. I JUST WOULD HAVE TO GO BACK TO WHAT I SAID YESTERDAY, I WOULD SAY.

Q. BUT IT IS NOT CLEAR TO ME AS TO WHY THERE ISN'T A DECISION WITHIN THE ADMINISTRATION AS TO WHEN THE LETTERS OF OFFER, OR THE COMMITMENT, WILL BE ACCEPTED UP OR DOWN, OR WHATEVER, BEFORE, OR WITHIN THE FEW DAYS AFTER THE ADMINISTRATION TOOK OFFICE. WHAT IS HOLDING IT UP? WHAT IS THE DELAY BESIDES THE TECHNICAL PROCESS? WE HAVE HAD THIS TECHNICAL PROCESS, AS YOU REMEMBER, IN THE SPRING OF 1975 -- IT WAS CALLED THE REASSESSMENT. IS THIS ANOTHER POINT OF REASSESSMENT, ALSO A DELAY, UNTIL AFTER PERHAPS THE SECRETARY OF STATE VISITS THE MIDDLE EAST? WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF THIS?

A. IN ANSWER TO YOUR QUESTION, WE SAID YESTERDAY THAT THE PROCESS -- WHICH I UNDERSTAND IS RATHER COMPLICATED IN TERMS OF THE NUMBER OF ITEMS AND THE TYPE OF ITEMS-- THE PROCESS IS IN PROCESS. IT IS PROPERLY THE DOMAIN--
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EXCUSE ME, I WILL RETRACT THAT. (LAUGHTER.) THE PROCESS IS IN TRAIN, AND THE DOD HAS RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT.

I CANNOT TELL YOU WHY IT TAKES AS LONG AS IT DOES OR WHAT, TECHNICALLY SPEAKING IS INVOLVED, BUT I SAID YESTERDAY, UNEQUIVOCALLY, THAT THE COMMITMENT WAS TAKEN UNDER THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION AND IS IN THE PROCESS OF BEING IMPLEMENTED THROUGH THIS TECHNICAL --

Q. PROCESS.

A. YES. (LAUGHTER.)

Q. YOU KEEP SAYING "TECHNICAL." YOU CERTAINLY CAN ASSURE EVERYBODY -- OR JOE, WHOEVER IS INTERESTED -- THAT THIS IS NOT A REASSESSMENT; COULDN'T YOU?

A. I THINK I MADE IT RATHER CLEAR YESTERDAY ABOUT OUR MOVING AHEAD WITH FULFILLING THE COMMITMENT MADE.

Q. RIGHT. IS THE ADMINISTRATION NOW REASSESSING ANY OF THAT COMMITMENT? -- A REASSESSMENT WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER CALLED "MAKING ISRAEL THE SCAPEGOAT" WHEN HE WAS ON THE CAMPAIGN TRAIL.

A. I THINK IT WAS MADE CLEAR YESTERDAY HOW WE VIEW THE PRESENT STAGE. I AM GIVING YOU A DESCRIPTION OF THE --

Q. OF THE TECHNICAL PROCESS.

A. THAT IS RIGHT. YOUR WORD.

Q. IS THERE ANY REASSESSMENT GOING ON?

A. I KNOW NOTHING OF ANY REASSESSMENT.

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Q. THANK YOU.

Q. THE OTHER DAY YOU MENTIONED CONCERNING THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON -- THAT THE SYRIAN TROOPS HAD MOVED INTO THE VICINITY OF NABATIYAH. HAVE YOU ANY INFORMATION REGARDING ANY FURTHER SYRIAN TROOP MOVEMENTS -- AND HAVE THEY MOVED INTO THE CITY ITSELF?

A. I DO NOT KNOW. THEY ARE STILL, AS FAR AS I KNOW, IN THE VICINITY OF NABATIYAH.

Q. YES. THERE'S A REPORT THIS AFTERNOON TO THE EFFECT THAT THE PENTAGON HAS ADOPTED A PLAN THAT IT WILL SELL OR

PROVIDE F-16 WARPLANES TO A COUNTRY ON THE BASIS OF TWO COUNTRIES EVERY YEAR, AND THE FIRST COUNTRY TO GET THEM WILL BE IRAN IN 1980. DO YOU HAVE ANYTHING ON THIS SORT OF THING?

A. NO SIR; I DO NOT.

Q. NOTHING AT ALL?

A. NOTHING ON IT.

Q. THE SENATE RESOLUTION ON FRANCE -- IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT FOLLOWING UP ON THAT? OF COURSE, IT'S THE SENSE OF THE SENATE RESOLUTION. WHAT IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT DOING ABOUT IT?

A. WHAT IS THE STATE DEPARTMENT DOING ABOUT IT?

Q. YES, IN TERMS OF THE REQUEST IN IT THAT OUR GOVERNMENT TAKE THE MATTER UP WITH FRANCE AND OTHER FRIENDLY COUNTRIES SO THAT A SITUATION LIKE THE ABU DAOUD CASE WILL NOT RECUR.

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A. WE MADE A STATEMENT I THINK AT THE TIME; AND NOW THE SENATE HAS PASSED THIS RESOLUTION. I THINK THE TWO STATEMENTS SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES.

Q. THERE IS SOMETHING ELSE. THE SENATE ASKED THE STATE DEPARTMENT TO SEND A TRANSCRIPT OF THE DEBATE TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT AND THERE WAS AN AMENDMENT ASKING THAT

THE TEXT OF THE RESOLUTION SHOULD BE SENT TO VICE PRESIDENT MONDALE SO HE COULD AT LEAST DISCUSS THE SUBJECT WITH THE FRENCH. THERE ARE TWO THINGS --

A. YES. I HAVE NO IDEA WHETHER THOSE SUGGESTIONS IN THE RESOLUTION WERE ACTED UPON. I THINK THE VICE PRESIDENT ARRIVES IN PARIS ONLY TODAY. I HAVE NO INFORMATION ON WHAT HAS BEEN DONE WITH REGARD TO THE TWO POINTS YOU RAISE ON THE SENATE RESOLUTION.

Q. THERE'S A REPORT FROM ISRAEL THAT ISRAELI OFFICIALS HAVE TRANSMITTED THROUGH THE UNITED STATES A WARNING THAT THE SYRIAN TROOPS HAVE ONLY A FEW MORE DAYS TO WITHDRAW FROM THAT PART OF LEBANON BEFORE ISRAEL WILL BE FORCED TO REACT. CAN YOU CONFIRM OR DENY IT?

A. I CAN DO NEITHER.

Q. HAVE YOU BEEN IN TOUCH WITH EITHER OF THESE GOVERNMENTS

WITHIN THE LAST 24 HOURS?

A. I THINK WE ARE IN FREQUENT TOUCH WITH ALL THE GOVERNMENTS CONCERNED THERE REGARDING THE SITUATION -- AS I HAVE SAID YESTERDAY AND THE DAY BEFORE. AS TO TIMING AND SPECIFIC INFORMATION, I CANNOT OFFER YOU ANY ENLIGHTENMENT AT ALL.

Q. CAN YOU TAKE THE TEMPERATURE AND TELL US IF IT'S UNCLASSIFIED

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GRAVE OR -- THAT "FEW MORE DAYS" SOUNDS KIND OF OMINOUS.

A. I WILL TRY TO TAKE THE TEMPERATURE.

Q. YES. AND GIVE US AN IDEA OF HOW BECALMED YOU ARE ABOUT THE SITUATION IN SOUTHERN LEBANON.

A. I DO NOT THINK WE ARE GOING TO GIVE YOU A CHARACTERIZATION -- BE IT GRAVE, CRITICAL OR DANGEROUS.

Q. WHAT IS THE NEW ADMINISTRATION POSITION REGARDING THE CONTRACT BETWEEN PAKISTAN AND FRANCE -- THE SAME STORY, REALLY?

A. I HAVE NOTHING THAT INDICATES THERE IS ANYTHING TO ADD TO WHAT WE MOST RECENTLY SAID ON THAT, FRANCOIS, AND I WOULD HAVE TO CHECK THE RECORD TO BE SURE.

Q. NOW THAT FRANCOIS HAS RAISED THAT, WOULD YOU ALSO CHECK THE RECORD TO SEE WHAT THE DISPOSITION OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION IS FOR THE PREVIOUSLY-INTENDED ARMS SALES TO PAKISTAN, WHICH WE UNDERSTOOD WERE CONTINGENT UPON THE PAKISTAN DISPOSITION OF ITS INTEREST IN THE REPROCESSING PLANT?

A. I WILL HAVE TO CHECK INTO THAT, MURREY.

2. THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION WAS POSTED IN THE DEPARTMENT PRESS OFFICE IN RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS TAKEN AT THE JANUARY 27 AND 28 PRESS BRIEFINGS:

Q. WOULD THE ADMINISTRATION CONSIDER A POLICY OF UNILATERALLY REDUCING ARMS SHIPMENTS TO THE MIDDLE EAST, OR WOULD SUCH A REDUCTION HAVE TO BE NEGOTIATED WITH THE SOVIET UNION?

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A. THIS IS OBVIOUSLY AN IMPORTANT QUESTION, AND IT IS

UNDER STUDY. AT THE PRESENT MOMENT WE HAVE NOTHING TO SAY BEYOND WHAT THE PRESIDENT SAID IN HIS RECENT INTERVIEW WITH AP AND UPI.

Q. WHAT IS THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S POSITION ON THE SALE OF ARMS TO PAKISTAN? IS THE APPROVAL OF THE SALE STILL LINKED TO PAKISTAN'S WILLINGNESS TO REFRAIN FROM PURCHASING A NUCLEAR REPROCESSING FACILITY?

A. THIS ISSUE, LIKE MANY OTHER FOREIGN POLICY ISSUES, REMAINS UNDER CONSIDERATION.

Q. ON THE ISRAELI ARMS DEAL, WILL CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESS OCCUR BEFORE, OR AFTER, THE LETTERS OF OFFER ARE SIGNED?

A. UNDER THE TERMS OF SECTION 36(B) OF THE ARMS EXPORT CONTROL ACT, CONGRESS MUST BE NOTIFIED OF ANY LETTER OF OFFER TO SELL CERTAIN CATEGORIES OF DEFENSE EQUIPMENT BEFORE THE LETTER OF OFFER IS SIGNED. THE TANKS, HOWIT-

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ZERS, AND FLIR ARE LIKELY TO FALL WITHIN THESE CATEGORIES, AND CONGRESS WOULD THEREFORE BE NOTIFIED PRIOR TO SIGNING THE LETTERS OF OFFER ON THESE ITEMS. THE TIMING OF THE CONSULTATIONS WITH CONGRESS ON THE CBUS HAS NOT YET BEEN DETERMINED.

VANCE

<< END OF DOCUMENT >>

Message Attributes

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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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